Association of Bay Area Governments
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Joint Policy Committee

PLANNING RESOURCES

Density and Development Capacity

Tool or Topic: **Density**	Author	Organization	Published	Format
Title: Still Stuck in Traffic: Coping with Peak-Hour Traffic Congestion	Downs	The Brookings Institution	1/1/2004	Book

#http://www.brookings.edu/press/books/stillstuckintraffic.htm#

Description:

Congested roads waste commuters' time, cost them money, and degrade the environment. Most Americans agree that traffic congestion is the major problem in their communities—and it only seems to be getting worse.

In this revised and expanded edition of his landmark work Stuck in Traffic, Anthony Downs examines the benefits and costs of various anticongestion strategies. Drawing on a significant body of research by transportation experts and land-use planners, he counters environmentalists and road lobbyists alike by explaining why seemingly simple solutions, such as expanding public transit or expanding roads, have unintended consequences that cancel out their apparent advantages. He argues that while there might be some measurable gains from increasing housing densities, most other land-use strategies have little effect. Indeed, the most powerful solutions, including higher gasoline taxes, increased public funding for transit, and highway tolls, are also the least palatable politically.

Still Stuck in Traffic contains new material on the causes of congestion, its dynamics, and its relative incidence in various parts of the country. In clear and realistic terms, Downs seeks to explore why traffic congestion has become part of modern American life and how it can be kept under control.

Tool or Topic: **Density**	Author	Organization	Published	Format
Title: The Debate Over Future Density of Development: An Interpretive Review	Myers	Lincoln Institute of Land Policy	1/1/1999	PDF file

#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=63#

Description:

Projections for rapid population growth by the year 2020 have increasingly focused planners' attention on the issue of the future density of development. This paper offers an interpretative review of major positions taken within the debate over future density, adopting a temporal, as well as spatial, perspective. While the debate is frequently conducted in factual terms, the literature on density is highly subjective, involving alternative views of the future as well as a fundamental divergence between long- and short-term, and collective and individual economic orientations. This review contrasts the positions held by proponents of compact development and sprawl, with a special section dedicated to a discussion of the various meanings of these two terms. Subsequent sections examine dueling reports on future development in California produced by the Bank of America and Wells Fargo Bank, the relationship of the new urbanism to density, and the tension within developers' interests relating to sprawl, on the one hand, and compact development and the new urbanism on the other.

Tool or Topic: **Density**	Author	Organization	Published	Format
Title: Visualizing Density (Phase 2), Images 1 (0.2 - 5.3 units/acre)	Campoli	Lincoln Institute of Land Policy	4/1/2004	PDF file

#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=899#

Description:

In the realm of community planning and land development, "density" is an often used but rarely understood term. The physical density of a development project can be measured in numerical terms, but such a measurement fails to convey the look and feel of density. Measured density is often very different than perceived density. This difference causes confusion in the community planning process and in the review of development proposals.

Visualizing Density, a catalog of aerial photographs, helps bridge the gap between measured and perceived densities. It includes hundreds of photographs of old and new neighborhoods around the country, and conveys both the measured and perceived density of each. These photographs help viewers translate density numbers into mental images. They also demonstrate how site design affects the perception of density. Neighborhoods at similar densities are juxtaposed to show how various design approaches can create places with dramatically different physical character.

This Phase 2 version of the Visualizing Density catalog updates the 2002 working paper previously disseminated by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

Tool or Topic: **Development Capacity**	Author	Organization	Published	Format
Title: Estimating and Analyzing Land Supply Development Capacity	Moudon	Lincoln Institute of Land Policy	5/1/2001	

#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=103#

Description:

This paper describes a method to estimate the land supply and development capacity of an urban area. The method, which draws from those devised by the City of Seattle, is applied to a portion of the city using parcel-level data with GIS software. Steps to estimate supply and capacity include the identification of all buildable lands (vacant, partially utilized, and underutilized lands) and the calculation of the development capacity of each one of these types of lands, taking into account zoning categories. Southeast Seattle has 11 percent and 17 percent of its net land supply in vacant or refill lands, respectively. It has the potential to increase its residential capacity by 57 percent, and its employment capacity by more than 80 percent. Analyses suggest that the potential for mixed-use development and redevelopment may be hindered by the relatively high supply of both vacant and refill lands in the lower-density residential zones presently preferred by both producers and consumers. Analyses also show that the criteria used to identify refill lands can have a substantial effect on development capacity estimates. This indicates that planners need to carefully test the criteria selected before performing final capacity estimates. Finally, this case study shows that while the structure and steps of land supply and capacity analysis are reasonably straightforward, the handling of the database requires special skills that many planners presently lack.

Tool or Topic: **Development Capacity**	Author	Organization	Published	Format
Title: Land Supply and Infrastructure Capacity Monitoring for Smart Urban Growth	Knaap	Lincoln Institute of Land Policy	11/1/2000	PDF file

#http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/pub-detail.asp?id=96#

Description:

The fundamental debate about urban growth—No growth, slow growth, go growth?—will never be resolved. As with politics and religion, all are entitled to their opinions, most of which derive more from deeply held beliefs than quickly calculated betas. As with politics and religion, there is something like agreement among a majority of people on very general principles (e.g., civilized life in the 20th century requires some form of government; there are benefits to some type of spiritual relationship with the universe), but that agreement disintegrates when one gets to the specifics (e.g., socialism or capitalism, Republican or Democrat, deist or agnostic, Christian or Moslem).

For urban growth there is a general agreement that it will occur, that it needs some type of management, and that such management requires (at least in part) public policies. The disagreements about growth management are about how many and which policies to use, and how extensively to apply them. Growth management, however, has some measurable dimensions not available in metaphysics. The type, location, amount, and rate of urban growth can all be measured; so can other factors that are correlated with and perhaps cause urban growth. This paper is motivated by the belief that such measures can be assembled, monitored, and analyzed to gain a better understanding of urban growth processes and growth management policy.